



Above, Staff Sgt. Chad Trauch, 99th Security Forces Squadron kennel master, gives Jon a police beret. Below, Major Kevin Mastin, USAF Thunderbirds, talks with Jon and his sister, Mattie, about what it is like to be a pilot.



Bottom middle, Jon takes a moment to hug his little brother, Joel, during the firepower demonstration on Friday. Bottom right, Jon flies a MiG-29 at the Threat Training Facility's indoor display.



Wishes can come true

**By Ms. Monique Staskiewicz
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Nellis opened its heart to make an 11-year-old boy's wish come true. Jon suffers from a life-threatening disease called Duchenne's muscular dystrophy. His wish was to be "in the Air Force" for a day. The Make-A-Wish Foundation grants wishes to children with life-threatening illnesses to enrich the human experience with hope, strength and joy. Jon's grandmother contacted the Make-A-Wish Foundation in hopes of having her grandson's wish granted. After much hard work and planning, Nellis and the Make-A-Wish Foundation fulfilled Jon's dream. "Jon is really into the military, big time," said his mother, Julie. "He has always liked airplanes and always wanted to learn how to fly. When volunteer's from Make-A-Wish asked Jon if he would like to be in the Air Force, Jon said that was exactly what he wanted to do." "We did our research and looked on the Internet at all the different bases and Nellis was the best place to go," his mother said. "Jon picked it for his wish." Flying all the way from Nebo, in western Kentucky, dressed in a flight suit

adorned with many Air Force patches, Jon smiled and said, "I got to see some planes and saw the Thunderbirds. I also climbed in a plane at the Threat Training Facility." "It's better than what I thought it would be like," he continued. "I thought I would just see planes take off and look around. I can't wait to see the firepower demonstration." His parents accompanied Jon, along with his sister, Mattie, age 8, and little brother Joel, age 1. "It's fun to do stuff like this, and it's good for my brother," said Mattie. The Make-A-Wish escort was retired Brigadier Gen. Roger Jones, who was Nellis' staff judge advocate from 1981 to 1984. He is the former president of Make-A-Wish Foundation of Southern Nevada. "I'm very proud of the Air Force," said Gen. Jones. "We have brought kids out here to see the Thunderbirds practice, but this is the first wish we've had on Nellis." Jon visited with many Nellis squadrons, receiving lots of patches, coins, T-shirts and much more. "I even met a general (Gen. Dave Moody, 57th Wing commander)! The first day I got here he showed me a video and gave me a coin, a patch, a pen and trading cards," said Jon enthusiastically. At the Load Barn, Master Sgt. Vincent



Capt. Tal Harris, 11th Reconnaissance Squadron, explains to Jon how the Predator works.

Price, 57th Logistics Support Squadron said, "We made him a part of the team. He inspected the aircraft to see if it was properly loaded. He was in awe and said that he had never seen an F-16 with weapons before." When asked which plane was his favorite, Jon responded, "My favorite plane is an F-16 because of the weapons, speed and mobility." Jon and his family toured Nellis' Thunderbirds hangar, the Threat Training Facility, Red Flag and the USAF Weapons School. They viewed the 99th Security Forces Squadron's dog demonstration and participated in a Load Barn inspection. The second day was spent at Indian Springs and range 63 viewing the firepower demonstration.

